

What is Claimed is:

1. A system in which an interactive television program guide and non-guide applications are implemented on user television equipment, comprising:  
a plurality of device resources within the user television equipment;

a plurality of program guide resources associated with the interactive television program guide; and

program guide application interface means for allowing the non-guide applications to use both the program guide resources and the device resources.

2. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide application interface means further comprises means for receiving and processing requests to use resources from the non-guide applications.

3. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide application interface means further comprises means for directing requests to use resources that are received from the non-guide applications to the device resources.

4. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the program guide application interface means further comprises means for directing requests to use resources that are received from the non-guide applications to the program guide resources.

5. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the device resources further comprise at least one device resource selected from the group consisting of: an on-screen display resource, a front-panel display resource, a user input interface resource, a tuner resource, a communications circuitry resource, and a memory resource.

6. The system defined in claim 1 wherein at least one of the program guide resources comprises a tuning resource.

7. The system defined in claim 1 wherein at least one of the program guide resources comprises a parental control resource.

8. The system defined in claim 1 wherein at least one of the program guide resources comprises a graphics library resource.

9. The system defined in claim 1 wherein at least one of the program guide resources comprises a pay program purchasing resource.

10. The system defined in claim 1 wherein at least one of the program guide resources comprises a program guide database access resource.

11. The system defined in claim 1 wherein at least one of the program guide resources comprises a scheduling resource.

12. The system defined in claim 1 wherein at least one of the program guide resources comprises a program guide menu resource.

13. The system defined in claim 1 further comprising means for maintaining a registered application list.

14. The system defined in claim 1 further comprising means for processing control requests from the program guide application and non-guide applications.

15. The system defined in claim 1 further comprising means for directing user input to the program guide application and non-guide applications.

16. The system defined in claim 1 wherein the plurality of device resources comprise set-top box device resources.

17. The system defined in claim 1 further comprising means for coordinating multiple requests to utilize the device resources.

18. The system defined in claim 1 further comprising means for coordinating multiple requests to utilize the program guide resources.

19. The system defined in claim 1 further comprising means for suspending the operation of one of the applications.

20. The system defined in claim 1 further comprising:

a user input device; and

means for resolving conflicts between applications that desire access to the user input device at the same time.

21. The system defined in claim 1 further comprising:

remote control keys for controlling the user television equipment; and

means for resolving conflicts between applications that request access to the same remote control keys.

22. A method for using a system in which an interactive television program guide and non-guide applications are implemented on user television equipment, comprising:

providing a plurality of device resources within the user television equipment;

providing a plurality of program guide resources associated with the interactive television program guide; and

allowing the non-guide applications to use both the program guide resources and the device resources.

23. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing the program guide application interface further comprises the step of receiving and

processing requests to use resources from the non-guide applications.

24. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing the program guide application interface further comprises the step of directing requests to use resources that are received from the non-guide applications to the device resources.

25. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing the program guide application interface further comprises the step of directing requests to use resources that are received from the non-guide applications to the program guide resources.

26. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing the device resources further comprises the step of providing at least one device resource selected from the group consisting of: an on-screen display resource, a front panel display resource, a user input interface resource, a tuner resource, a communications circuitry resource, and a memory resource.

27. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing the interactive program guide further comprises the step of providing a tuning resource.

28. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing the interactive program guide

further comprises the step of providing a parental control resource.

29. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing the interactive program guide further comprises the step of providing a graphics library resource.

30. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing the interactive program guide further comprises the step of providing a pay program purchasing resource.

31. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing the interactive program guide further comprises the step of providing a program guide database access resource.

32. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing the interactive program guide further comprises the step of providing a scheduling resource.

33. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing the interactive program guide further comprises the step of providing a program guide menu resource.

34. The method defined in claim 22 further comprising the step of maintaining a registered application list.

35. The method defined in claim 22 further comprising the step of processing control requests from the program guide application and non-guide applications.

36. The method defined in claim 22 further comprising the step of directing user input to the program guide application and non-guide applications.

37. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the step of providing device resources comprises the step of providing set-top box resources.

38. The method defined in claim 22 further comprising the step of coordinating multiple requests to utilize the device resources.

39. The method defined in claim 22 further comprising the step of coordinating multiple requests to utilize the program guide resources.

40. The method defined in claim 22 further comprising the step of suspending the operation of one of the applications.

41. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the system includes a user input device, the method further comprising resolving conflicts between applications that desire access to the user input device at the same time.

42. The method defined in claim 22 wherein the system includes remote control keys for controlling the user television equipment, the method further comprising resolving conflicts between applications that request access to the same remote control keys.